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ABSTRACT

Career experiences, plans, and academic characteristics of 30,000 college-bound seniors in the state of Washington in 1979 are detailed. Among findings were that a large number of college-bound seniors have been active in extracurricular activities, ranging from athletics to community service to special interest groups; that 67 percent held a regular part-time job; and that over 40 percent expressed an interest in independent study programs. Other results showed that more than half wanted help in deciding educational and vocational goals and with financial aid, slightly over 40 percent wanted help with math skills and about one-third with written English and study skills. Almost 40 percent planned to start directly in a four-year college and slightly over 10 percent planned to earn a professional level degree. Career plans with the largest overall percentages were in the fields of management and business, health, and education, with slightly over one-third of the students undecided as to careers. Test scores showed that reading comprehension remained fairly constant while vocabulary and English usage seemed to indicate a possible end to the five-year decline. All math scores increased over 1978 results. (PHR)

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Career Experiences, Plans, and Academic Characteristics
of Washington 1979 College-Bound Seniors

SUMMARY

The Washington Pre-College (WPC) Test is completed by the large majority (almost 30,000) of college-bound students in the state. A combination of the cognitive and noncognitive data gathered through the WPC Test, then, contribute to a fairly comprehensive picture of our college-bound population.

Initially, it seems that many Washington 1979 college-bound seniors have been active in a large number of extracurricular activities, ranging from athletics to community service to special clubs and interest groups. Quite a few have been engaged in outside-of-class experiences including paid employment, artistic, musical, community involvement, and athletic experiences. Many have taken advanced placement, honors, and accelerated programs.

Large percentages of students were interested in continuing their high school extracurricular interests and perhaps trying some new activities. Many feel that their present levels of academic preparation will need improvement as they enter college. Also, over half want assistance with career planning and financial aid help.

Most students planned to earn four year college degrees either by beginning a four-year college or transferring from a two-year institution. Business and management, health professions, and education were the areas with the largest percentage of students in both expected major and planned career. About two-thirds were very sure or fairly sure of their plans.

In terms of WPC Test scores it appears that reading comprehension remained fairly constant and spelling continued to rise. Both vocabulary and English usage scores seemed to indicate a possible end to the decline (the only ones shown over the past 11 years) in these areas. All three math areas, quantitative skills, applied mathematics, and mathematics achievement, increased for this year's college-bound students. WPC Test scores, then, have continued to show trends unlike the score decline experienced by the rest of the country.

High school grades remained constant or increased slightly to add, to some degree, to what has been a long-term trend. Concerning the amount of credits earned, the traditional basic skill areas of English and math increased and elective credits decreased. This rise in English and math credits, plus the fact that the WPC Test is a differential assessment program and tends in some areas to be a statewide curriculum-based measure, may account for the very different picture of test performance for Washington students than shown by other parts of the country.

This report was written by Richard J. Noeth, Executive Director, The Washington Pre-College Testing Program, Seattle, Washington, November, 1979.

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Career Experiences, Plans, and Academic Characteristics of Washington 1979 College-Bound Seniors

This monograph is one of a series of reports published by the Washington Pre-College Testing Program describing selected student characteristics. Traditionally, the Washington Pre-College (WPC) Test has been completed by the large majority of college-bound students in the state. The cognitive and non-cognitive data gathered through the WPC Test, then, contribute to a comprehensive picture of our college-bound student population.

Similar to a study conducted on last year's college-bound students (Noeth, 1978), this report initially focuses on students' high school honors programs, extracurricular activities, and out-of-class experiences. Next, special program interests, extracurricular activity plans, and expressed need for help in college are covered. Then, present career plans are discussed.

Also included in this report are students' WPC Test scores plus their high school grades and amounts of credits earned. This academic information will be discussed in light of a recently published report which examined these types of data over the previous ten years (Noeth, 1979).

Procedures

The data in this report are based on all juniors and seniors who took the WPC Test during the spring and fall of 1978, respectively. As shown in Table 1, this represents 26,017 students. While other students complete the WPC Test in the spring of their senior year and as they enter college, these groups were not included in order to maintain sample homogeneity in terms of age and time of testing.

Much of the information in this report is presented in tabular form containing rounded percentages for each item for males, females, and the total group. These are based on all students responding to the particular item. In all cases except Table 1 which includes all students and Table 2 where about 15% chose not to respond, over 90% of the students responded to each item listed.

Note that a larger percentage of the college-bound students were female (54%) than male (46%), although males constituted a slightly larger percent of Washington 12th graders for the 1978-79 school year. Table 2 indicates that the large majority were of Caucasion/White background.

TABLE 1

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS

SEX	N	%
MALE	11978	46
FEMALE	14039	54
TOTAL	26017	100

TABLE 2

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS ETHNIC GROUP

ETHNIC GROUP	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
AMERICAN INDIAN/NATIVE AMERICAN	2	2	2
ASIAN AMERICAN	4	4	4
AFRO-AMERICAN/BLACK	2	2	2
CAUCASIAN/WHITE	90	91	90
MEXICAN-AMERICAN/CHICANO	2	1	1

TABLE 3

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS ENROLLED IN HIGH SCHOOL ACCELERATED OR HONORS PROGRAMS

ACCELERATED OR HONORS PROGRAMS	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
ENGLISH	17	22	19
MATHEMATICS	27	18	22
NATURAL SCIENCES	14	8	11
SOCIAL SCIENCES	7	6	6
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	11	13	12

High School Honors Programs, Extracurricular Activities and Outside of Class Experiences

Small percentages of talented students are usually enrolled in advanced placement, accelerated, or honors programs in high school. Table 3 presents percentages of students enrolled in such programs. English and math programs had the largest enrollment with more females in English and more males in mathematics programs.

Extracurricular activity involvement is recorded in Table 4. Overall, varsity athletics and special interest groups appeared to be the most popular activities to join. Next were intramural athletics, campus or community service organizations, student government, musical groups, publications, and departmental clubs. Of these more popularly joined activities, more males were involved in athletics and more females in special interest and departmental clubs, campus or community service organizations, and musical groups.

Experiences that take place outside of class often involve large amounts of time and are significant learning experiences which can often affect career decisions and plans. As with extracurricular activities, Washington college-bound students have been largely involved in such endeavors.

In terms of work experiences, about two-thirds of the students held regular paying part-time jobs. Many also held a full-time summer job and sold goods or services. Overall, more males were involved in work activities. Also, almost one-third of the students held non-school leadership positions and campaigned in a school election. Somewhat less held student offices. Females seemed to have been only slightly more involved in outside-of-class leadership activities than males. Work and leadership experiences are contained in Tables 5 and 6, respectively.

Table 7 presents students' scientific activities. The most frequently checked activity was performance of an independent experiment, although only about one student in ten was involved in this. Science, in general, was the least popular outside-of-class activity. Artistic activities are listed in Table 8. Over 40% finished a work of art on their own (10% more females than males) and a lesser percentage exhibited a work of art at school.

College-bound students' out-of-class speech and musical activities are described in Tables 9 and 10, respectively. About one-fifth had given a public recital and slightly less had helped with directing, set design, or production of a play. Regarding musical activities, half of the students played a musical

TABLE 4

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS HIGH SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
STUDENT GOVERNMENT	23	29	26
PUBLICATIONS (NEWSPAPER, YEARBOOK, ETC)	18	23	21
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC	23	25	24
VOCAL MUSIC	12	27	20
DEBATE	7	6	6
DRAMA, THEATRE	15	23	19
VARSITY ATHLETICS	62	41	51
INTRAMURAL ATHLETICS	46	32	38
POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS	6	5	5
RACIAL OR ETHNIC ORGANIZATIONS	3	4	3
RELIGIOUS CLUBS	14	22	18
DEPARTMENTAL CLUBS	15	24	20
RADIO OR TV	7	4	5
FRATERNITY OR SORORITY	2	3	2
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (CHEER TEAM, DRILL TEAM, SKI CLUB, ETC)	40	54	48
CAMPUS OR COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS	20	35	28

TABLE 5

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS OUTSIDE-OF-CLASS WORK ACTIVITIES

WORK ACTIVITIES	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
HELD A REGULAR PART-TIME JOB	72	63	67
HELD A FULL-TIME SUMMER JOB	56	40	47
SOLD GOODS OR SERVICES	35	34	34
WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL WORK-STUDY, DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION, OR COOPERATIVE WORK PROGRAM	12	16	14
STARTED BUSINESS OR SERVICE	11	4	8
SUPERVISED WORK OF OTHERS	21	17	19
MANAGED FINANCIAL AFFAIRS OF SOME ORGANIZATION	9	13	11

TABLE 6

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS OUTSIDE-OF-CLASS LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

LEADERSHIP ACTIVITY	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
APPOINTED TO STUDENT OFFICE	16	21	19
CAMPAIGNED TO ELECT MYSELF OR SOMEONE ELSE TO A SCHOOL OFFICE	26	35	31
HELD A NON-SCHOOL LEADERSHIP POSITION	30	32	31
PARTICIPATED IN A NON-SCHOOL POLITICAL CAMPAIGN	8	8	8
PARTICIPATED IN A MOVEMENT TO CHANGE INSTITUTIONAL RULES OR PROCEDURES	14	17	16
WAS ELECTED TO ONE OR MORE STUDENT OFFICES	17	24	21
RECEIVED AWARD OR RECOGNITION FOR LEADERSHIP	17	19	18

TABLE 7

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS OUTSIDE-OF-CLASS SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

SCIENCE ACTIVITY	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
WROTE A SCIENTIFIC PAPER WHICH RECEIVED THE HIGHEST AWARD IN SCHOOL	9	5	7
DID AN INDEPENDENT SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT	15	7	11
PARTICIPATED IN A NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION SUMMER PROGRAM	1	0	0
WON A PRIZE FOR A SCIENTIFIC WORK OR STUDY	4	3	3
PLACED IN AN OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL SCIENCE CONTEST	1	1	1
PLACED IN A SCHOOL SCIENCE CONTEST	4	3	3
PARTICIPATED IN A SCIENTIFIC CONTEST	10	6	8

instrument, over 40% performed in a school musical group, and about one-third gave a public, individual or group recital. Although participation was fairly equal in the speech area, clearly more females were engaged in outside-of-class musical activities.

A little over one-third of Washington's college-bound students wrote an original, but unpublished piece of creative writing on their own. About one-fifth worked on the school newspaper or yearbook and had poems, stories, or articles appear in a school publication. These data on students' writing activities, which had greater female participation, are presented in Table 11. Table 12 contains information on students' community service involvement. About one-third received recognition for a club or organizational activity. Slightly less were active in helping to develop community pride and participated in programs to assist handicapped or deprived children or adults. Females were more involved in these types of activities than males.

Table 13 includes students' athletic activities. Almost 80% regularly attended athletic events and about two-thirds participated in individual athletic activities. Over one-half participated in one or more varsity athletic team events. Many more males than females were engaged in outside-of-class athletic activities.

TABLE 8

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS OUTSIDE-OF-CLASS ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES

ARTISTIC ACTIVITY	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
FINISHED A WORK OF ART ON MY OWN	38	48	43
EXHIBITED A WORK OF ART AT SCHOOL	27	30	28
EXHIBITED A WORK OF ART OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL	11	14	13
EXHIBITED A WORK OF ART IN A LOCAL ART SHOW	7	7	7
WON A PRIZE IN A SCHOOL ART COMPETITION	4	5	5
WON A PRIZE IN AN ART COMPETITION OUT OF SCHOOL	5	7	6
HAD ARTWORK PUBLISHED IN A PUBLIC NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE	5	3	4

TABLE 9

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS OUTSIDE-OF-CLASS SPEECH ACTIVITIES

SPEECH ACTIVITY	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
PLACED IN A REGIONAL OR STATE SPEECH OR DEBATE CONTEST	2	2	2
ENTERED A SCHOOL SPEECH OR DEBATE CONTEST	7	8	7
HAD SUBSTANTIAL ROLE IN SCHOOL OR CHURCH PLAYS	10	13	12
HAD ROLES IN NON-SCHOOL OR NON-CHURCH PLAYS	9	13	11
APPEARED ON RADIO OR TV AS A PERFORMER	5	5	5
HELPED WITH DIRECTING, SET DESIGN, OR CONSTRUCTION OF PLAY	13	19	16
GAVE A SPEECH RECITAL	20	21	20

TABLE 10

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS OUTSIDE-OF-CLASS MUSICAL ACTIVITIES

MUSICAL ACTIVITY	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
COMPOSED MUSIC	10	10	10
PERFORMED WITH A PROFESSIONAL MUSIC GROUP	9	12	11
PERFORMED IN A SCHOOL MUSICAL GROUP	36	49	43
GAVE A PUBLIC RECITAL (GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL)	25	40	33
PLAYED A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT	45	54	50
RECEIVED A SUPERIOR RATING IN A STATE MUSIC CONTEST	7	10	9
PARTICIPATED IN A STATE MUSIC CONTEST	12	17	14

TABLE 11

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS OUTSIDE-OF-CLASS WRITING ACTIVITIES

WRITING ACTIVITY	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
WORKED ON SCHOOL PAPER OR YEARBOOK STAFF	17	23	20
HAD POEMS, STORIES, OR ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN A SCHOOL PUBLICATION	17	22	20
WROTE AN ORIGINAL BUT UNPUBLISHED PIECE OF CREATIVE WRITING	26	45	36
HAD POEMS, STORIES, OR ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN A PUBLIC NEWSPAPER OR IN A STATE ANTHOLOGY	3	4	4
WON A PRIZE FOR CREATIVE WRITING	2	3	3
PUBLISHED A CREATIVE WRITING WORK IN A PUBLIC MAGAZINE	1	1	1
PUBLISHED A CREATIVE WRITING WORK IN A SCHOOL MAGAZINE	6	8	7

TABLE 12

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS OUTSIDE-OF-CLASS COMMUNITY SERVICE INVOLVEMENT

COMMUNITY/SERVICE INVOLVEMENT	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
WON RECOGNITION FOR A CLUB OR ORGANIZATION ACTIVITY	33	35	34
TAUGHT RELIGIOUS CLASSES OR LED RELIGIOUS SERVICES	8	15	12
WORKED AS A VOLUNTEER IN A HOSPITAL, CLINIC, OR HOME	10	25	18
WAS ACTIVE IN PROGRAM HELPING DEVELOP COMMUNITY PRIDE	24	25	25
PARTICIPATED IN A PROGRAM TO ASSIST HANDICAPPED OR DEPRIVED CHILDREN OR ADULTS	17	28	23
VOLUNTEERED ON A CIVIC IMPROVEMENT OR VOTER EDUCATION PROJECT	9	7	8
RECEIVED RECOGNITION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE	12	13	12

TABLE 13

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS OUTSIDE-OF-CLASS ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

ATHLETIC ACTIVITY	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
PARTICIPATED IN ONE OR MORE VARSITY ATHLETIC TEAM EVENTS	63	41	51
EARNED A VARSITY LETTER	50	32	40
WAS A CHEERLEADER OR CAPTAIN OF A VARSITY TEAM	12	15	14
RECEIVED ALL-CITY, LEAGUE, COUNTY, OR STATE TEAM AWARD	15	10	12
PARTICIPATED IN AN ORGANIZED ATHLETIC COMPETITION OUTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL	59	35	46
PARTICIPATED IN ONE OR MORE INDIVIDUAL ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES	72	65	68
ATTENDED ATHLETIC EVENTS REGULARLY	81	78	79

College Program Interests, Extracurricular Plans, and Perceived Needs for Help

Students replied to a number of items about their college plans when completing the WPC Test. Over 40% expressed an interest in independent study programs, a little more than a third in honors programs, and slightly less than a quarter in advanced placement for math, English, or natural sciences. Males were more interested in math and natural science programs and females in English programs. These data are presented in Table 14.

Students' extracurricular interests are contained in Table 15. Almost two-thirds were interested in joining special interest groups and a little over a half in intramural athletics. Slightly less than 40% were interested in varsity athletics and almost 30% in joining fraternities or sororities and publications activities. More males were interested in the athletic activities and more females in the other activities mentioned.

Students were asked to indicate areas in college with which they will need help. These items are reported in Table 16. More than half wanted help in deciding educational and vocational goals and with financial aid. Slightly over 40% wanted help with math skills and about a third with written English and study skills. More females wanted help with math and more males with written English skills.

Career Plans

Educational degree goals of Washington college-bound students are presented in Table 17. Almost 40% planned to start directly in a four-year college to earn a four-year degree while about one quarter intended to start at a two-year college and then transfer to earn a four-year degree. Slightly over 10% planned to earn a professional-level degree. Regarding the types of institutions they planned to attend, as shown in Table 18 about one-third planned to attend a four-year regional university or state college. Slighity less than a quarter preferred to attend a state university and the same amount planned to attend a two-year community college.

Table 19 indicates that a very high percentage of college-bound students planned to enroll full-time. College residence plans are shown in Table 20. Slightly over one-third planned to live in residence halls and the same amount with parents or relatives. About one-fifth planned to live off campus.

TABLE 14

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS INTERESTS IN SPECIAL COLLEGE PROGRAMS

PROGRAM	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
HONORS PROGRAM	33	38	36
INDEPENDENT STUDY	42	43	43
ADVANCED PLACEMENT-MATH	31	16	23
ADVANCED PLACEMENT-ENGLISH	19	26	23
ADVANCED PLACEMENT-NATURAL SCIENCE	26	14	20
ADVANCED PLACEMENT-SOCIAL SCIENCE	17	18	17
ADVANCED PLACEMENT-FRENCH	5	9	7
ADVANCED PLACEMENT-SPANISH	7	10	9
ADVANCED PLACEMENT-GERMAN	6	6	6
FOREIGN STUDY	11	21	16

TABLE 15

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS COLLEGE EXTRACURRICULAR INTERESTS

EXTRACURRICULAR INTERESTS	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
STUDENT GOVERNMENT	17	24	21
PUBLICATIONS (NEWSPAPER, YEARBOOK, ETC)	21	34	28
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC	19	20	20
VOCAL MUSIC	12	26	19
DEBATE	10	10	10
DRAMA, THEATRE	15	28	22
VARSITY ATHLETICS	48	29	38
INTRAMURAL ATHLETICS	61	45	52
POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS	12	11	11
RACIAL OR ETHNIC ORGANIZATIONS	4	6	5
RELIGIOUS CLUBS	15	25	21
DEPARTMENTAL CLUBS	19	28	24
RADIO OR TV	27	21	24
FRATERNITY OR SORORITY	25	32	29
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (CHEER TEAM, DRILL TEAM, SKI CLUB, ETC)	59	70	65
CAMPUS OR COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS	23	46	36

TABLE 16

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS REQUESTS FOR HELP IN COLLEGE

HELP REQUESTED WITH	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
MATHEMATICAL SKILLS	35	47	42
WRITTEN ENGLISH SKILLS	37	31	34
READING SKILLS	19	14	16
STUDY SKILLS	31	30	31
DECIDING EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL GOALS	51	56	54
FINANCIAL AID	55	58	57

TABLE 17

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS EDUCATIONAL GOALS

GOAL	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
NO SCHOOL BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL	0	0	0
VOCATIONAL OR TECHNICAL PROGRAM (LESS THAN 2 YEARS)	6	6	6
TWO-YEAR COLLEGE DEGREE	7	12	10
START AT A 2-YEAR COLLEGE, THEN TRANSFER TO EARN A 4-YEAR COLLEGE DEGREE	24	26	25
START DIRECTLY IN A 4-YEAR COLLEGE TO EARN A 4-YEAR DEGREE	40	39	39
ONE OR TWO YEARS OF GRADUATE STUDY	4	3	4
PROFESSIONAL-LEVEL DEGREE (PH.D, M.D. J.D., ETC.)	16	11	13
OTHER	3	3	3

TABLE 18

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS COLLEGE TYPE PREFERENCE

TYPE	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
TWO-YEAR COMMUNITY COLLEGE	20	25	23
FOUR-YEAR CHURCH-RELATED COLLEGE	6	10	8
FOUR-YEAR NON-CHURCH PRIVATE COLLEGE	4	3	4
FOUR-YEAR STATE COLLEGE OR REGIONAL UNIVERSITY	35	33	34
STATE UNIVERSITY	27	20	23
TECHNICAL INSTITUTE	4	2	3
BUSINESS COLLEGE	1	3	2
HOSPITAL NURSING PROGRAM	0	1	1
UNDECIDED	2	3	2

TABLE 19

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT PLANS

PLAN TO ENROLL	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
FULL-TIME	89	86	87
PART-TIME	11	14	13

TABLE 20

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS COLLEGE RESIDENCY PLANS

PLANS	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
RESIDENCE HALL	34	36	35
OFF CAMPUS	21	18	20
PARENTS OR RELATIVES	34	35	35
FRATERNITY OR SORORITY	11	10	10

Students' planned majors are listed in Table 21. Largest overall percentages are in the business and management (16%), health (13%), and education areas (9%). An equal percentage of males and females planned business and management majors but more females planned both health and education majors. Engineering, social science, and fine and applied arts majors were next most frequently selected. A much greater percentage of males planned on engineering majors and slightly more females on social science and fine and applied arts majors. Table 22 shows students' degree of certainty for their expected major. Almost half were fairly sure, about one-third not sure, and only one-fifth very sure of their planned major area of study.

Table 23 contains information on students' planned career areas. Largest overall percentages were in the business and management (15%), health (14%), and education (10%) areas. Although there was a slight sex difference in business and management, much larger percentages of females planned health and education careers. Next most popular career areas were engineering (with a much greater percentage of males) and social science. Slightly over one-third of the students were not sure of their career areas, almost half fairly sure, and almost one-fifth were very sure. Degree of certainty is shown in Table 24.

TABLE 21

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS PLANNED COLLEGE MAJOR AREA

MAJOR AREA	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
AGRICULTURE	8	2	5
ARCHITECTURE	5	3	4
BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES	4	4	4
BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT	16	16	16
COMMUNICATIONS	4	4	4
COMMUNITY SERVICE	(2)	(3)	(3)
PROTECTIVE	2	2	2
SOCIAL	0	2	1
COMPUTER SCIENCE	3	2	2
EDUCATION	6	12	9
ENGINEERING	16	2	8
FINE AND APPLIED ARTS	5	8	7
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	0	2	1
HEALTH PROFESSIONS	(7)	(18)	(13)
GENERAL	2	6	4
MEDICINE	5	4	4
MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY	0	2	1
NURSING AND HUMAN CARE	0	6	4
HOME ECONOMICS	0	3	2
HUMANITIES	1	2	2
MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES	2	1	1
PERSONAL SERVICES	0	2	1
PHYSICAL SCIENCES	4	1	2
SECRETARIAL SCIENCE	0	4	2
SOCIAL SCIENCE	7	9	8
TRADE, INDUSTRY, TECHNOLOGY	9	1	5

TABLE 22

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS CERTAINTY OF EXPECTED MAJOR

CERTAINTY LEVEL	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
VERY SURE	18	21	20
FAIRLY SURE	48	47	47
NOT SURE	34	32	33

TABLE 23

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS PLANNED CAREER AREA

CAREER	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
AGRICULTURE	8	2	5
ARCHITECTURE	5	3	4
BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES	3	3	3
BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT	16	14	15
COMMUNICATIONS	4	5	5
COMMUNITY SERVICE	(3)	(5)	(4)
PROTECTIVE	2	1	2
SOCIAL	1	3	2
COMPUTER SCIENCE	3	2	2
EDUCATION	6	13	10
ENGINEERING	15	2	8
FINE AND APPLIED ARTS	5	7	6
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	0	1	1
HEALTH PROFESSIONS	(8)	(19)	(14)
GENERAL	0	1	1
MEDICINE	7	6	6
MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY	0	4	2
NURSING AND HUMAN CARE	1	9	5
HOME ECONOMICS	0	3	2
HUMANITIES	1	2	1
MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES	1	0	1
PERSONAL SERVICES	0	4	2
PHYSICAL SCIENCES	3	1	2
SECRETARIAL SCIENCE	0	5	3
SOCIAL SCIENCE	6	8	7
TRADE, INDUSTRY, TECHNOLOGY	11	1	6

TABLE 24

1979 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS CERTAINTY OF EXPECTED CAREER

CERTAINTY LEVEL	MALES - %	FEMALES - %	TOTAL - %
VERY SURE	17	19	18
FAIRLY SURE	46	46	46
NOT SURE	37	35	36

Academic Characteristics

This section of the report contains means for WPC subtests and composite scores, high school grades, and high school credits earned for these 1979 college-bound students. To provide a better perspective of possible trends, similar data for the previous five years, in a recent ten-year study of WPC Test scores (Noeth, 1979), will be included.

WPC Test Scores

Table 25 contains a description of the nine subtests in the WPC battery. Three composite scores (English, verbal, and quantitative) are derived from these subtests. These are formed by applying factor weights, or in the case of the English composite, differential weights, to various combinations of subtests. The verbal composite includes the reading comprehension, English usage, spelling, and vocabulary subtests, the English composite contains all of the preceding except reading comprehension, and the quantitative composite is comprised of all three math subtests.

Table 26 presents the scores for all four English subtests for both this year's college-bound students and for the past five years. For 1977 to 1978 testing, the vocabulary subtest remained

TABLE 25

SUBTESTS OF THE WPC TEST BATTERY

SUBTESTS	DESCRIPTION
Vocabulary	A 12 minute, 45 item unit which tests knowledge of the meaning of words. Students select the correct synonym from five choices to a given word.
English usage	A 20 minute, 45 item test which measures knowledge of grammar, correct word usage, capitalization, and punctuation.
Spelling	A 10 minute, 35 item unit which tests ability to identify a misspelled word from a choice of five words.
Reading comprehension	A 22 minute unit containing 25 items about several paragraphs. This test measures ability to derive stated or implied meanings from the paragraphs.
Quantitative skills	A 27 minute, 45 item test which measures ability to decide whether enough information is given to solve a problem and to determine the relative size of two given quantities.
Applied mathematics	A 22 minute, 20 item unit which tests ability to solve applied arithmetic and elementary algebra problems.
Mathematics achievement	A 45 minute, 45 item test which measures knowledge of algebra and geometry.
Spatial ability	A 10 minute, 20 item unit which tests ability to visualize how two dimensional figures would look in three dimensions if folded along certain lines.
Mechanical reasoning	A 15 minute, 20 item test which measures knowledge in understanding physical principles as applied to mechanical devices.

fairly constant, reading comprehension increased slightly, and both English usage and spelling increased to a greater extent. Males showed a slightly larger increase than did females on each of the four English subtests.

Math subtests scores are presented in Table 27. All three subtests increased from the previous year. Male increases were greater than females in each of the three subtests. Also, the spatial ability and mechanical reasoning subtests both remained fairly constant from the previous year. The three composite scores are presented in Table 28. As would be expected from the subtests, each composite showed an increase with the verbal and quantitative composite showing the largest gains.

High School Grades and Credits

Six areas of high school grades are collected and reported for students completing the WPC Test. Table 29 contains the average overall, English, and math GPAs for these students and Table 30, the natural science, social science, and foreign language GPAs. All of the six GPA areas remained fairly constant with very little change from the previous year.

TABLE 26

TRENDS IN THE FOUR WPC ENGLISH SUBTEST MEANS

	VOCABULARY			ENGLISH USAGE			SPELLING			READING COMPREHENSION		
YEAR	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1973	49.7	49.0	49.3	47.3	50.4	48.9	46.9	51.3	49.2	48.5	49.4	49.0
1974	49.3	48.3	48.7	46.4	48.9	47.7	46.6	51.0	48.9	49.2	49.6	49.4
1975	48.7	47.7	48.2	45.8	48.2	47.1	46.3	50.5	48.6	49.0	49.5	49.3
1976	48.5	47.7	48.1	46.1	48.4	47.3	46.8	50.9	49.0	49.2	49.4	49.3
1977	48.0	47.5	47.7	45.6	48.3	47.0	47.0	51.2	49.2	48.8	49.4	49.1
1978	48.1	47.4	47.7	46.1	48.6	47.5	47.5	51.5	49.7	49.2	49.4	49.3

TABLE 27

TRENDS IN THE THREE MATHEMATICS SUBTEST MEANS

	QUANT. SKILLS			APPLIED MATH			MATH ACHIEVEMENT		
YEAR	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1973	51.0	47.4	49.1	51.8	47.0	49.3	51.1	47.3	49.1
1974	51.3	47.3	49.2	52.7	47.7	50.0	51.0	47.0	48.9
1975	50.9	47.0	48.8	52.5	47.5	49.9	51.0	46.8	48.8
1976	51.3	47.4	49.2	52.8	47.7	50.0	51.4	47.3	49.2
1977	51.0	47.6	49.2	52.5	47.8	50.0	51.0	47.4	49.0
1978	51.6	47.9	49.6	53.0	48.0	50.3	51.7	47.8	49.6

TABLE 28

TRENDS IN THE WPC ENGLISH, VERBAL, AND QUANTITATIVE COMPOSITE MEANS

	ENGLISH COMP			VERBAL COMP			QUANT. COMP		
YEAR	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1973	47.9	49.9	49.0	47.4	49.6	48.5	51.3	46.8	48.9
1974	47.2	48.9	48.1	47.2	49.0	48.1	51.8	47.0	49.2
1975	46.6	48.2	47.5	46.7	48.4	47.6	51.6	46.8	49.0
1976	46.8	48.4	47.6	46.9	48.6	47.8	51.9	47.1	49.3
1977	46.3	48.3	47.4	46.6	48.5	47.6	51.6	47.2	49.2
1978	46.7	48.4	47.7	47.5	49.2	48.4	52.4	47.8	49.9

TABLE 29

OVERALL, ENGLISH, AND MATH GPA'S

	OVERALL GPA			ENGLISH GPA			MATH GPA		
YEAR	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1973	2.91	3.11	3.01	2.81	3.17	3.00	2.55	2.63	2.59
1974	2.94	3.12	3.04	2.83	3.17	3.01	2.57	2.67	2.62
1975	2.97	3.14	3.06	2.85	3.18	3.02	2.61	2.68	2.65
1976	2.99	3.16	3.08	2.88	3.19	3.05	2.64	2.70	2.67
1977	2.98	3.15	3.07	2.85	3.17	3.02	2.63	2.70	2.66
1978	2.99	3.14	3.07	2.85	3.16	3.02	2.65	2.70	2.68

TABLE 30

NATURAL SCIENCE, SOCIAL SCIENCE, AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE GPA'S

	NATURAL SCIENCE			SOCIAL SCIENCE			FOREIGN LANGUAGE		
YEAR	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1973	2.74	2.86	2.81	2.86	3.06	2.96	2.73	3.09	2.93
1974	2.77	2.86	2.82	2.87	3.05	2.97	2.77	3.12	2.96
1975	2.79	2.87	2.83	2.91	3.07	2.99	2.80	3.12	2.98
1976	2.81	2.89	2.86	2.94	3.09	3.02	2.83	3.14	3.00
1977	2.79	2.87	2.83	2.91	3.07	3.00	2.81	3.14	3.00
1978	2.81	2.87	2.85	2.92	3.06	3.00	2.85	3.15	3.02

TABLE 31

OVERALL, ENGLISH, AND COMBINED MATH CREDITS
EARNED FROM GRADES 9 THROUGH 11

	OVERALL			ENGLISH			COMBINED MATH		
YEAR	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1973	36.25	36.78	36.53	6.67	6.76	6.72	5.06	4.34	4.68
1974	36.74	37.14	36.95	6.75	6.84	6.80	5.07	4.32	4.67
1975	37.49	37.89	37.71	6.78	6.88	6.83	5.22	4.50	4.84
1976	37.28	37.61	37.46	6.72	6.82	6.77	5.33	4.59	4.93
1977	37.12	37.39	37.26	6.71	6.81	6.76	5.31	4.62	4.94
1978	36.96	37.33	37.16	6.75	6.84	6.80	5.47	4.80	5.11

TABLE 32

TOTAL NATURAL SCIENCE, FOREIGN LANGUAGE, AND ELECTIVE CREDITS
EARNED FOR GRADES 9 THROUGH 11

	NATURAL SCIENCE			FOREIGN LANGUAGE			ELECTIVES		
YEAR	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1973	3.89	3.22	3.53	2.79	3.24	3.03	7.06	8.37	7.75
1974	3.84	3.22	3.51	2.74	3.15	2.96	7.36	8.66	8.05
1975	3.87	3.30	3.57	2.78	3.13	2.97	7.49	8.68	8.12
1976	3.85	3.30	3.55	2.74	3.13	2.95	7.42	8.49	8.00
1977	3.82	3.27	3.52	2.66	3.08	2.89	7.35	8.33	7.88
1978	3.79	3.29	3.52	2.69	3.10	2.91	7.13	8.11	7.66

Table 31 contains the average amounts of credits earned overall from ninth through eleventh grade as well as English and total math credits. Natural science, foreign language, and elective credits are contained in Table 32. Overall there was a slight credit drop from the previous year. There was a drop in elective credits taken but an increase in English and math credits.

Discussion

Perhaps this year's students can be best characterized as people who have been involved. They have been active in a large number of extracurricular activities, ranging from athletics to community service to special clubs and interest groups. Quite a few have been engaged in outside-of-class experiences including paid employment, artistic, musical, community involvement, and athletic activities. Also, many have taken advanced placement, honors, and accelerated programs. In fact, the percentage of students enrolled in such programs is greater than for last year's college-bound class.

Concerning their college plans, large percentages of students were interested in continuing their high school extracurricular interests and perhaps trying some new ones. In fact, a larger percentage plan to get involved in college

extracurricular activities than were involved in similar high school activities.

Many feel that their present levels of academic preparedness will need improvement as they enter college. Are these accurate perceptions of their own preparation levels, unreal expectations of college academic demands, or some combination of both? Over half want financial aid help and assistance with career planning. College plans of this year's students were quite similar to those of last year's college-bound class.

Career plans are often the most interesting items to ponder when considering college-bound students. In terms of educational goals, most planned to earn four-year college degrees either by beginning a four-year college or transferring from a two-year institution. Over half preferred to attend four-year state institutions and most students planned to enroll full time. These were similar to the plans of last year's students.

Students' patterns of planned majors and careers after college were similar, as might be expected. Business and management, health professions, and education were the areas with the largest percentages of students in both expected major and planned career. Similar patterns of certainty existed for both areas. Essentially, about two-thirds of the students were very sure or fairly sure of their plans. These planned majors and

careers are fairly similar to those of 1979 college-bound students with a slight increase in the business and management area and a slight decrease in the health area.

As with last year's students, there remained a fairly distinct trend of traditional sex-role orientation in terms of experiences and plans. Females, for example, preferred special high school and college programs in English (males preferred science and math), participated and planned to participate in community service activities (males in athletics), and were involved in musical and writing outside-of-class activities (more males had been employed and preferred science-related experiences). While more females planned majors and careers in education, nursing and human care, and secretarial science, more males chose agriculture, engineering, and trade-technology areas.

The data on college-bound students' academic background provide additional, up-to-date information to previously-examined trends (Noeth, 1979). For the WPC Test, in the English area, 1979 college-bound students' scores in both vocabulary and English usage perhaps signify an end to declining trends on these two subtests. (This, of course, could be temporary and only future data will reveal the broader perspective.) Reading comprehension was consistent with previous data and spelling showed its highest average over the six-year period (1973-1978) and a continual rise since 1975.

Math also showed an increase with the quantitative skills, applied mathematics, and math achievement subtests all recording their highest scores in the past six years. The composite scores all increased with the quantitative composite the highest it has been in the six-year period. WPC Test scores, then, have continued to show trends unlike the score decline experienced by the rest of the country (CEEB, 1977; Munday, 1976; The College Board, 1979).

High school grades remained constant or increased slightly to add to what has been a long-term trend similar to that found nationally (Ferguson and Maxey, 1976). Perhaps more noteworthy, however, are the findings on the amounts of credit earned by college-bound students. Unlike other implications nationally (e.g., CEEB, 1977), elective credits have decreased for the fourth year in a row for Washington students. Furthermore, the traditional basic skills areas of English and math have increased-- math to the highest it has been. It could be that this continual rise in the amounts of English and math credits earned, in conjunction with the fact that the WPC Test is a differential assessment program and tends in some areas to be a statewide curriculum-based measure, accounts for a very different picture of test performance for Washington students than shown by other parts of the country.

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